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Spatial identity in the theoretical and empirical contexts¹

In his well-known article “Urbanism as a way of life”, Louis Wirth not only gives us the definition of the city as “a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals” (Wirth 1938: 8), but also points the main perspectives of sociological city research. They correspond, on the one hand, to theoretical dimensions of the city and, on the other hand, to the phenomenon of urbanism:

(1) as a physical structure comprising a population base, a technology and ecological order; (2) as a system of social organization involving a characteristic social structure, a series of social institutions, and a typical pattern of social relationships; and (3) as a set of attitudes and ideas, and a constellation of personalities engaging in typical forms of collective behaviour and subject to characteristic mechanism of social control.

(ibid.: 18—19)

Although Wirth does not pay special attention to the problems of the city identity, but it seems unquestioned that in a heterogeneous community such problems are of vital importance. That is why this paper tries to widen the perspective as above including to it another dimension: the spatial identity.

¹ This article used some parts of the book *Spoleczne znaczenie miejskich przestrzeni publicznych* [Social meaning of urban public spaces] which is being prepared by the author and will be published in 2016. The part of the article was written based on the grant *Identity of the city and its inhabitants in relations to public space. A study of three cities* financed by Polish Science Centre (Narodowe Centrum Nauki) nr UMO — 2013/09/B/HS6/00418 (grant manager dr hab. Tomasz Nawrocki).

Theoretical perspective of the spatial identity

The problem of identity is one among the most complex ones in social sciences. Generally, identity can be defined as “a set of qualities composing the social actor’s characteristics in his/her own view” (Bokszański 2008: 16). A spectrum is wide and diverse including such indicators as ethnicity, job, religion, gender and — what is of special importance to us — also the spatial identity.

Peter Weichhart describes spatial identity as a “cognitive representation and emotional estimation of the part of environment, which individuals include in the concept of himself/herself and perceive it as a part of himself/herself. Referring it to social communities, it is the identity of a group, which perceives defined part of space as a component of sense of the common membership — functional to the group cohesion and becoming the element of ideological representation of the ‘we’ concept” (Weichhart 1990; after Łukowski 2002: 82—83). Such identity should be interpreted on the individual, social and social system (institutional) level. According to Weichhart, spatial identity is a feature of individuals, groups and communities. However, social and individual forms of identity should not be treated as the unquestioned ones, there are some authors who deny collective identity in social world exists (Bokszański 2008: 56—59). Such a standpoint appears too radical but the problem of relation between individual identity and collective identity is real.

According to Bokszański, collective identity should be analyzed by the following dichotomies:

1. Collective identities typical of the existing societies vs. collective identities typical of the model societies;
2. Collective identities understood as different forms of self-consciousness of collective subject vs. collective identities understood as a group essential culture values distinguishing one group from another.

(ibid.: 64—66)

From this perspective the spatial identity on its social and institutional level could belong to a category of the collective one typical of the existing societies and the one identified with a group essential culture values. The individual level of the spatial identity is based upon the individual identification with space. It results in interiorizing the part of space while constructing the individual self (Weichhart 1990; after Łukowski 2002: 85). One’s inhabited district or city could act as the space under consideration.

Weichhart’s category of spatial identity is close to Mikołaj Madurowicz notion of space identity. For Warsaw geographer, it is a “set of every places which — if not existing — make the subjects searching for alternative places or

create sense of threat of one's own identity; and all the subjects whose identities appear in their intersubjectively experienced space dimensions, although the existence of the subjects themselves at a given moment is not necessary" (Madurowicz 2008: 67). Both Weichhart and Madurowicz underline the usefulness of space or part of space (i.e. part of the city) in creating individual identity. Space was of crucial importance for traditional societies closely connected with their spatial worlds limited to their own villages, cities, islands (Krzysztofek, Szczepański 2002: 62). Only social elite was more mobile. Contrary to traditional society, the contemporary one is quite mobile. Private or professional trips are typical of people in 21st century. But, as one could expect, this rule does not concern everyone to the same extent. Zygmunt Bauman rightly notices that ability to move from one place to another is the basic factor of social stratification in contemporary world (Bauman 2000: 6—7, 14—15). Mobility influences relations with space and spatial identity. People, generally, at least in the western culture, have more chance to choose their place of living and choose their space for identity.

The choice of space for identity is connected with contemporary interpretation of the identity which is understood as "a reflexive project and construction" (Giddens 2006: 105—106). Some elements and patterns for identity are chosen like products in supermarket (Mathews 2005). Besides ethnicity, religion, sub-culture and so on the space could be one of them. It could happen that some people will ignore or reject space as a source of identification and they will choose other elements for creating their identity projects. Nevertheless, place (such as e.g. city space) still appears a point of reference in the process of building one's identity.

Analyzing the relations between people and places, David M. Hummon distinguished five types of them: everyday rootedness, ideological rootedness, alienation, place relativity and placelessness (Hummon 1992; after Lewicka 2012: 118). Both kinds of rootedness pay attention to being identified with the place. The former one is a type of "traditional" identification resulted from long living there. The latter concerns people for whom rootedness and identification are a result of their conscious choice. Alienation means reluctance toward place and readiness to change it. Place relativity is the situation when people appreciate top quality of life, so the place is important on condition that it enables achieving it. Placelessness means people do not need the "medium" of place in their conception of identity (Lewicka 2012: 118). Only the last category comprises the situation when people reject place as a source of their identification. Thus, it could be ascertained that people still refer to the space or place of living in one way or another.

Majority of people in contemporary world live in cities. Thus, the fundamental place of reference for them is the city. According to Aleksander Wallis, there are four types of the identity with the city: "1. Sense of individual and group

identity with the city community; 2. Sense of identity with the city — its walls, landscape and space; 3. Sense of identity with the history of the city of walls and the city of community; 4. Sense of identity with the city aims and its future” (Wallis 1990: 173). Wallis shows important distinctions between the identity based upon space and the identity based upon community. He also adds other indicators like history and future functioning as a point of reference for city dwellers. The Wallis’ “sense of identification with city walls, landscapes and space” could be considered equivalent to the Weichhart’s category of his spatial identity, both of them crucial from the author [of this article] point of view.

As it was showed above, even in contemporary, mobile society spatial references could co-create individual and social identities. “This process is of a discursive character; individual identities are created in relation to the city”. (Błaszczuk 2013: 177) Referring to the Weichhart’s proposal, it could be seen that the same kind of space co-creates every level of spatial identities (Figure 1).

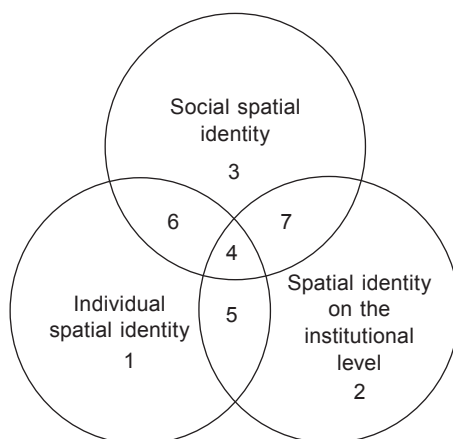


Figure 1. The relations between space and Weichhart’s level of spatial identity

Source: the author’s model according to Weichhart’s typology (Weichhart 1990; after Łukowski 2002: 82—85).

In such a context, there are seven types of space that can be distinguished based on the model of the relation between space and types of spatial identity:

1. Space which creates only individual spatial identity.
2. Space which creates only spatial identity on the institutional level.
3. Space which creates only social spatial identity.
4. Space which creates every type of the spatial identity.
5. Space which creates individual and institutional level of the spatial identity.
6. Space which creates social and institutional level of the spatial identity.
7. Space which creates individual and social level of the spatial identity.

Distinguished categories are helpful while analyzing the empirical data. They could be useful showing the relations between political and social functions of the city identity (Błaszczuk 2013: 178). The political one should be interpreted on the institutional level and the social functions (among others) build up the social level of spatial identity. Moreover, the institutional level concerns the process of creating the “symbolic economy” (Zukin 2008: 3—11) which is not as developed in Silesian cities as in the described by Zukin Manhattan but some aspects of it are also visible.

Methodological issues

The sociological research of space can be conducted in different methodological perspectives. In this context, Florian Znaniecki’s culturalistic approach with its humanistic factor appears the crucial one (Znaniecki 1999: 123). Spatial identity understood as the dimension of individual experience is put under consideration.

The empirical data are based on the following research projects:

1. *Social experience of urban public space* accomplished in 2012 by the author in the Upper Silesian cities: Jastrzębie Zdrój, Tychy, Żory. The research was of a quantitative character and was realized using the personal schedule-structured interview (Nachmias, Nachmias 2001: 249). There were used the representative quota sampling for each city. The quota were constructed comprising the following indicators: sex, age, educational status, status on the labour market. General sample was n-982: 339 interviews were made in Jastrzębie Zdrój, 327 in Tychy and 316 in Żory. The choice of the city was goal-directed and took into account the cities growing rapidly in the socialism era, especially in the 1960. and 1970. (Bierwiazzonek 2013: 40—44).
2. *Gliwice — dilemma of identity of Silesian city* realized in 2013 in Gliwice by Tomasz Nawrocki. The research was of the same methodological character as the former one. The sample was 390. The questionnaire included the questions used in the previous project what allowed to get comparative perspective, especially when taking into account that Gliwice has more complex city space than the cities analyzed in the project above. General data concern every of the chosen cities (Table 1). The most important variable is the existence of classical urban structure with market square. Such structures exist in Gliwice and Żory. Jastrzębie Zdrój and Tychy are the modernist cities in their socialist forms with domination of districts with blocks of flats. Needless to say, the urban structure influences the spatial identity.

Table 1

General data concerning the researched cities

	Gliwice	Jastrzębie Zdrój	Tychy	Żory
Year of the obtaining the city law	1276	1963	1951	1272
Area (in km ²)	134	85	82	65
Population (31.12.2012)	186,210	91,723	129,112	62,052
Unemployment rate [%] (28.02.2014)	7.8	9.5	6.9	11.3
Rate of the people with higher education	21.7	11.3	18.5	12.9
Existence of classical market square	Yes	No	No	Yes

Source: Central Statistical Office of Poland

The project results allow getting more knowledge on individual and social levels of spatial identity.

3. *Identity of the city and its inhabitants in relation to public space. A study of three cities* which is currently running (it started in April 2014 and should be finished until March 2017). The project conducts research in the Polish cities: Gliwice, Gdańsk and Wrocław by using the following techniques: content analysis of institutional documents, personal in-depth interview with social experts, personal schedule-structured interview with inhabitants. The content analysis of the official documents (especially *Strategy of the integration and sustainable development of Gliwice to 2022* and its updating) will be partly used here. This allows to get more knowledge on the institutional level of the spatial identity where individual experiences of space are replaced by institutional view to the city. However, it is still a type of experiencing the space that Znaniecki's methodological statement could be referred to.

Spatial identity in the empirical context — individual level

The analysis of spatial identity should start from analyzing the data concerning declarative identification of the respondents with the cities under discussion. They were asked if they identified themselves with the city inhabited by him/her. Territorial identification was declared by 81.8% respondents in Gliwice, 78.6% — in Tychy, 76.4% — in Jastrzębie Zdrój, 71.2% — in Żory. A little lower level of identification concerning the emotional relationships with other inhabitants of the city was mentioned by 73.6% respondents in Gliwice, 69.4% — in Tychy, 68.5% — in Jastrzębie Zdrój, 71.2% — in Żory. Thus, the identity with the city

was higher than the identity with the community of the city. Generally, it can be noticed that the level of identity with the city was relatively high.

The next question concerned directly the issue of the spatial identity. The respondents were asked if they could designate space — crucial for them in their identifications with their cities (question asked to those who previously declared their identification with the city).

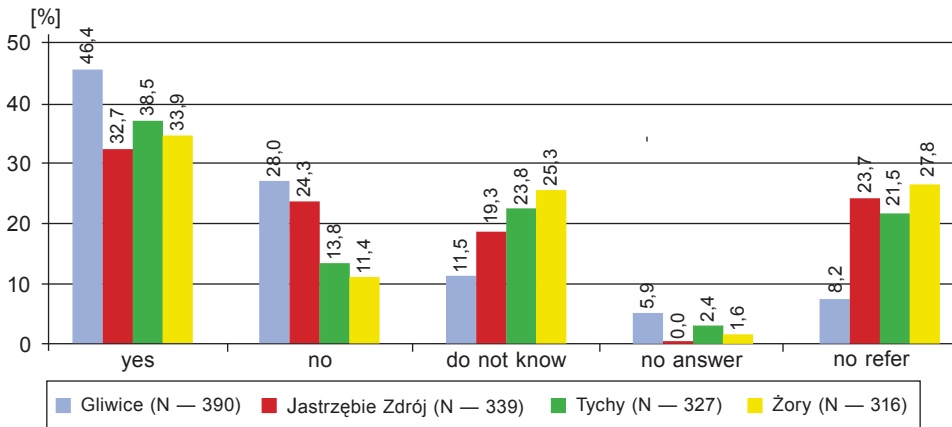


Chart 1. The existence of space which is important for identification with the city
Source: Krzysztof Bierwiaczonek, *Social experience of urban public space*; Tomasz Nawrocki, *Gliwice — dilemma of identity of Silesian city*.

As the data show, percentage of the interviewees declaring they had space important for them in their identifications with the city differs: from 32.7% in Jastrzębie Zdrój to 46.4% in Gliwice. It could be accepted those percentages concern people equipped with spatial identity on the individual level. The percentage would have been higher if the respondents who had not declared their identification with the city would have been not taken into account. Regardless of the method of data aggregation, the percentage of people declaring their spatial identity is about 40%. Some of the respondents identifying with the city do not need space to strengthen their identification. Similar results were received by Maria Lewicka who researched the place attachment in Poland and Ukraine. While using the Hummon's categories², she found out that 41.9% of Polish respondents and 47.4% of Ukrainians pointed to the place attachment in their ideological and traditional dimensions (Lewicka 2012: 317). Bearing in mind that the category of spatial identity is semantically close to the concept of rootedness, there are about 40% of people who need close relation with space to construct their identity. Moreover, it also proves that the construction of identity in contemporary world could be also fulfilled when based on non-spatial values.

² These categories were earlier described in this article; see p. 59.

Patterns of spatial identity differ among different groups of cities. In modernist cities — Tychy and Żory — there is higher (than in Jastrzębie Zdrój and Gliwice) percentage of respondents who declare lack of knowledge about the space which could be important for them from the point of view of their spatial identifications. Nonetheless, they could discover such place and strengthen their identification with the city then. In Jastrzębie Zdrój and Gliwice there is higher (than in Tychy and Żory) percentage of interviewees declaring that such space in their city does not exist. For Gliwice it could be a result of rejecting urban space as a potential source of identification. For Jastrzębie Zdrój it could mean such space simply does not exist. Modernist city without long history with the city centre deprived of meaningful space. Tychy and Żory cases could suggest that their inhabitants do not know their own cities, whereas 1/4 of them answered they did not know if such a space existed at all.

What are the reasons of relatively low level of individual spatial identity? Spatial identity on the individual level requires self-reflection on the individual relation with place and the city. One could acquire such reflection during his lifetime part of which has been spent in the city. Results of the research show that among the variables influencing the spatial identity is the number of years spent in the city.

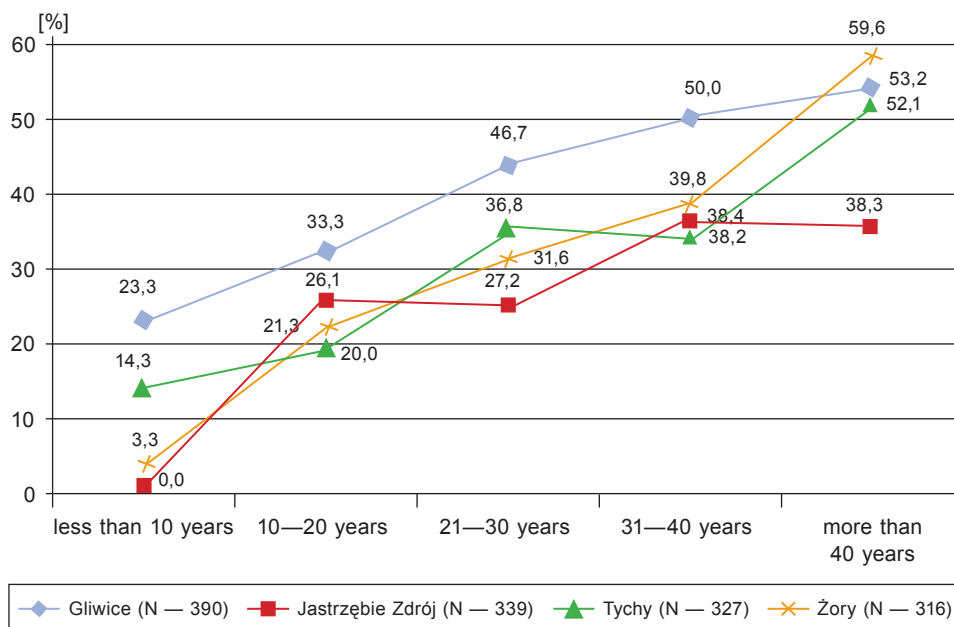


Chart 2. The period of inhabiting the city (in years) and declaring the space important for identification with the city

Source: Krzysztof Bierwiazek, *Social experience of urban public space*; Tomasz Nawrocki, *Gliwice — dilemma of identity of Silesian city*.

Presented data allow us to expect that the more diverse (in spatial terms) the city is (what is often thought of as a result of its size), the easier it is to find space enabling to identify with it. Perhaps that is why one can find higher percentage of people declaring individual spatial identity in Gliwice than in Żory or Jastrzębie Zdrój. Both of them are smaller than Gliwice and both are characterized by less diverse urban structure. Tychy could be found somewhere in-between those cases.

The respondents were asked to indicate space/spaces important for their spatial identities. They pointed to a number of different places. Unfortunately, sometimes the answers were not precise enough, e.g. indicating a park without specifying which one it was meant in fact. Due to it, some categories were aggregated.

Table 2

The most often indicated spaces which are important for spatial identification on the individual level (respondents could indicate 3 spaces at a maximum; questions were asked only to those who declared existence of such places)

Gliwice (N — 180)		Jastrzębie Zdrój (N — 111)		Tychy (N — 126)		Żory (N — 104)	
place	percent	place	percent	place	percent	place	percent
Inhabited district	21.1	Old Spa Park	38.7	Paprocany (recreation area next to lake)	30.2	Market square	61.3
Market square	18.9	District Zdrój	22.5	Inhabited district	23.0	Old city	15.1
Parks	13.8	Inhabited district	12.6	Baczyński Square	11.1	Parks	13.2
Radio-station's Tower	11.6	Coal mine	9.0	Old Tychy (district)	10.3	Inhabited district	11.3
Palm-house/ Old city	5.6	Old (former) Spa buildings	5.4	Brewery	8.7	St Philippe and Jacob Church	10.4

Source: Krzysztof Bierwiazzonek, *Social experience of urban public space*; Tomasz Nawrocki, *Gliwice — dilemma of identity of Silesian city*.

The spaces that the respondents pointed to could be assigned to a few categories. Among them there are as follows: 1) urban public spaces, i.e. market squares (in Gliwice and Żory), parks and recreational areas (in all the cities under consideration); 2) old parts of these cities (the Old Towns or the oldest districts); 3) significant landmarks (radiostation's tower in Gliwice, coal mine in Jastrzębie Zdrój, brewery in Tychy, church in Żory); 4) the respondent's own

district. Except for the fourth category, all the others create the spatial landscape of the city. It shows that the spatial identity on the individual level is often influenced by the most important city space. The exceptions to this rule are the choices of inhabited districts as the places constructing spatial identifications on the individual level. It appears that for about 20% people declaring their individual spatial identity, in spite of changes going on in the cities, it is the inhabited district of the respondent that is important not only for functional reasons but also for identifying ones. Thus, one's district still should be looked upon as the familiar and assimilated space (Jałowiecki, Szczepański 2002: 374).

The frequency of pointing to one's own district as a space which is important for his/her spatial identity shows another regularity. The bigger the city is, the more respondents declaring their spatial identity live in it. The fewest "positive" answers were given in Żory (62,000) — 11.6%. The most "positive" answers were given in Tychy (125,000) — 23% — and Gliwice (186,000) — 21.1%. Even more — 43.2% — were given in Katowice with their population of 300,000 inhabitants (the research conducted in 2010; Bierwiazonek, Lewicka, Nawrocki 2012: 147). Although this regularity must be confirmed in next researches, based on the existing data it could be ascertained that in big cities with legible district structures there are the districts which influence the inhabitants' spatial identities. Moreover, big cities could be difficult for general recognition. Under such circumstances, the respondent's own district provides him/her with the sense of safety and closeness of domestic space.

Spatial identity in the empirical context — social level

The social level of spacial identity could be simply expressed as: "We — people who belong to the city's space". Reference to city spatial dimension is of importance here and so are other factors having an impact on the city as it is. On the other hand, building up the sense of community in its spatial context results from the essential qualities of the city space that the respondents have to deal with. According to Waław Piotrowski, "Subjective description of the city identity, functioning as a basis for the stereotypes concerning the city, takes place through selective choice of some of its objective features, attribution of some non-existing ones to it and magnification of the minor ones together with diminishing or even passing over the crucial features of the city". (Piotrowski 1994: 174) Such stereotypes are focussed on the elements creating the city identity which "grows up from particular culture, geography, history and it is a representation of the processes going on in the city" (Madurowicz 2008: 103).

According to the respondents, the social level of the space identity was understood as a place building up the city as it is perceived by them. The question is: What place/places conveys/convey the best the city as such from the perspective of its inhabitants?

Table 3

Places rendering the best the city as such (5 most often indicated places or areas; respondents were asked to indicate 5 places at a maximum)

Gliwice (N — 390)		Jastrzębie (N — 339)		Tychy (N — 327)		Żory (N — 316)	
place	percent	place	percent	place	percent	place	percent
Market square	47.9	Old Spa park	41.9	Paprocany (recreation area next to the lake)	47.7	Market square	53.5
Radiostation Tower	23.7	Coal mines (coal pits)	18.6	Baczyński square	28.7	Old city	20.5
Palm-house	17.5	District Zdrój	9.4	Brewery	18.6	Park	12.6
Chopin park	13.0	Shopping malls	6.2	Old Tychy district	12.8	Districts of bloks of flats	12.3
Old city	12.4	Mall „Galeria Jastrzębie”, Old Spa buildings	5.9	Market square	10.4	Saint Philippe and Jacob Church	10.2
No answer	1.0		3.5		3.0		0.6
No such places	3.8		12.7		4.3		7.3
No opinion	4.6		8.8		8.3		13.3
Together: no answer [%]	9.4		25		15.6		21.2

Source: Krzysztof Bierwiazzonek, *Social experience of urban public space*; Tomasz Nawrocki, *Gliwice — dilemma of identity of Silesian city*.

Catalogue of the places is similar to the one including the places vital when concentrating on the individual level of spatial identity. Important difference concerns lack of his/her own district in the respondents' choices. It does matter from the individual point of view in his/her relation to space but it does not when people think about the city as a whole. From the respondents' viewpoints, their cities as such are mainly created due to their most representative urban public spaces, e.g. market squares and green areas (parks and recreational areas). Market squares are the most important in cities which have the ones at their disposal. When cities were not characterized by historical urban structure, the market squares were replaced by the parks. In all the research cases (cities), the

“aesthetic” (or, in other words, “postcard”) spaces were pointed to as the ones people like visiting. Far more than the ones representing rather troublesome heritage like the districts with blocks of flats.

Another regularity concerns landmarks, especially the industrial ones. Both coal-pits in Jastrzębie Zdrój and brewery in Tychy are the elements that the visual landscape of the cities was composed of. Both types of the buildings, except their fundamental industrial role, also play the symbolic ones: historical/cultural heritage and object of local pride (17th-century brewery in Tychy) and emotional role: coal mine as a “feeder” (coal mines in Jastrzębie Zdrój). The radiostation tower in Gliwice is also looked upon as a city cultural heritage.

There is a number of typical places composing each of the cities spatial identity on its social level. Among them one can distinguish the radiostation tower (as mentioned above) and palm house in Gliwice. The former is famous both for historical reasons as a place of Nazi provocation in 1939 and architectural ones as the tallest tower made of wood in Europe. The latter is one of the most readily visited objects in Gliwice, situated in the Chopin park.

Another place composing the spatial identity on its social level is the shopping centre. There were the shopping centres which were pointed to by the inhabitants of Jastrzębie Zdrój. Perhaps that is why due to the absence of interesting spaces in Jastrzębie Zdrój, the city with a nice park and a number of districts composed of the blocks of flats being a result of designing the city as an answer to industrial needs (coal mines) in 1960s and 1970s. Such a city structure does not make building up the spatial identity an easy task.

While characterizing the spatial identity on its social level, one should pay special attention to the Baczyński Square in Tychy situated in the central part of the district from the 1950s. and revitalized in 2009. As a result of the revitalization, there appeared a fountain, some restaurants and cafés which caused the place to be readily visited by the inhabitants of Tychy. This example shows that traditional patterns of urban public space, e.g. squares composed into classical urban structure, still have potential for creating public space meaningful from the social identity point of view.

When researching the spatial identity among the inhabitants of Żory, it occurs a distinctive feature of it is pointing to the oldest church in the city. Only there the respondents enumerated church as the object creating the city as they saw it.

Interesting knowledge on spatial identity could be also received from data concerning the respondents who did not give answers at all. For analytical reasons it is important to distinguish between the respondents declaring the absence of typical objects or places and those who did not answer at all. The former suggests a lack of distinctive space, whereas the latter rather a lack of knowledge on interesting places.

Based on the data above, one could come to a conclusion that Jastrzębie Zdrój is the city with the fewest number of significant spaces. Contrary to it,

Gliwice appears a city with a range of interesting places which could influence the process of identification (Table 3). Such problems refer to diverse (in their urban structure) cities like Gliwice. Although one can find the cities not as diverse as Gliwice — e.g. Tychy — that could also generate identification processes. In order to succeed them, the local authorities should do their best to make use of the city space potential. The present Baczyński Square and Lake Paprocany in Tychy could serve as a good example of it.

Spatial identity in the empirical context — institutional level The case of Gliwice³

Spatial identity on the institutional level was analyzed only for Gliwice (due to size restriction). In this case, the content analysis of the city officials documents was made use of. The most useful one was *The strategy of integration and sustainable development of Gliwice up to 2022* and its updated versions (2011 and 2014). The main idea of the document is defining the crucial goals of the city development taking into account its internal and external conditions (Dziurbejko 2006: 70). Although *The strategy...* is more of a general character, especially in its diagnostic part, it also defines and describes the city fundamental qualities including its identity, its strengths and weaknesses. What is of special importance for us here, *The strategy...* could help analyze the institutional level of spatial identity.

The strategy... indicates the following dimensions of the city identity: economic (development of innovative economy), social (development of civic society), urban (town-planning processes in the context of metropolization processes and creation of interesting offer in the most important public space and housing and education areas) ones (*The strategy of integration and sustainable development of Gliwice up to 2022. Actualization 2014*, pp. 17—18). These dimensions are different from the types mentioned above, however, they show the way of thinking about Gliwice in the context of its future development.

Both for economic identity and for urban identity, the role of public space is crucial. It is mainly understood as a space for attractive — according to inhabitants and visitors — spending their leisure time. Generally, the public space is treated as a strength of Gliwice. The authors of the document enumerate the most important ones: market square and the Old Town (with Zwycięstwa street), parks,

³ This subchapter was written as a part of the project: *Identity of the City and its Inhabitants in Relations to Public Space. A Study of Three Cities* (grant financed by National Science Center number: UMO — 2013/09/B/HS6/00418, grant manager: dr hab. Tomasz Nawrocki).

“academic district” (with the Silesian Technical University), cultural and sports amenities (with the big Gliwice arena which is now under construction) (ibid.: 21).

There is a number of places which, though not having been mentioned in the survey research, appeared in the institutional document (e.g. “academic district”). Other two crucial places were also enumerated somewhere else in the document. Nonetheless, Gliwice is proud of the bishop-stool situated in the city and the revitalized area “New Gliwice” instead of former coal mine. Thus, the research carried out on the institutional level enriches the perspective of analyzing the space of the city with discovering places which occur important for describing the institutional level of the spatial identity and, as a result, the city as it is.

The content analysis of *The strategy...* reveals the local authorities’ approach to capitalize symbolic places (Zukin 2008). The most recognizable landmark — radiostation tower — is a main component of the Gliwice logotype; every city promotion paper and promotional materials are illustrated with it. There are also other places used as economic symbols of the city, like “New Gliwice”, highway crossroad located in Gliwice, or the market square.

Using the model — example analysis of the spatial identity

The model created according to Weichhart’s idea could be used for presenting the relations between three levels of spatial identity. Here only the data based on the Gliwice case were used (size restriction).

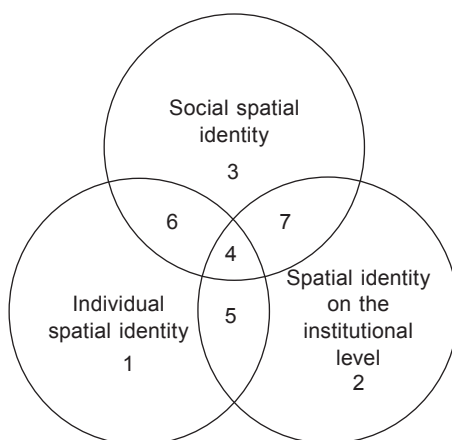


Figure 2. The relations between space and Weichhart’s level of spatial identity.
The case of Gliwice

Source: the author’s model based on Weichhart’s typology
(Weichhart 1990; after Łukowski 2002: 82—85).

1. Spaces which create only individual spatial identity. The space mentioned by a few individual respondents, e.g. “Kettle” tea house, heap in the Ostropa district.
2. Spaces which create only spatial identity on the institutional level. The best example is the revitalized area “New Gliwice” — the pride of local authorities nearly no perceived by respondents in the survey research.
3. Spaces which create only social spatial identity, especially parts of the districts, like e.g. the centre of the Łabędy district, or the area around the Sikornik district. They are the places influencing rather local (district) identity than the whole city identity.
4. Spaces which create every type of the spatial identity. The crucial places in the city which are important for every type of level of the spatial identity. The most important is market square but also Chopin park, radiostation tower and area next to it.
5. Spaces which create individual and institutional level of spatial identity. The spaces which are known for professionals (historians or architects), which are also the places of city’s pride, e.g. old urban structure or building of modernist Weichman department store.
6. Spaces which create social and institutional level of the spatial identity. Space of events (also official ones) and place of pride for community (but not as important as the one mentioned in the category 4). Krakowski Square (next to the Silesian Technical University), place with Piłsudski monument.
7. Spaces which create individual and social level of the spatial identity. Areas of particular districts which are the important place of reference for inhabitants.

The assignment of spaces to particular categories brings difficulties. Some borders between the categories are vague, especially when a given space could be classified as belonging simultaneously to at least two categories, e.g. Is a small square in the district only a place of reference to individual identity or also to a social one?

It was assumed here that if any place is mentioned only by individuals (in the quantitative research), it belongs to the individual level of spatial identity (e.g. the heap in Ostropa); in turn, if any space is mentioned by a group respondents, it belongs to the social level of spatial identity (e.g. the area near Sikornik district). Obviously, it cannot be excluded that in the case of bigger sample the assignment could change a little and some places might belong to the social level of spatial identity. This problem is a result of the way of making the research. This problem seems unavoidable taking into account the quantitative character of the research. Quantitative research does not allow getting deeper information. Such information could be achieved from the qualitative research which will be conducted in Gliwice next year. On the other hand, the quantitative technique gives knowledge on statistical regularities. From this point of view it must be

ascertained that quantitative research gives opportunity to find out the most important spaces composing three levels of spatial identity (the 4th category). In case of Gliwice, they are as follows: market square, the Old Town, Chopin's park, radiostation tower.

Conclusion

Simple enumeration of the most important spaces in the city is interesting but it should be accompanied by the question: What are the social consequences of it? One of the key answers gives Wojciech Łukowski: "Likewise belonging to occupational, age or social categories, the common points of reference to space compose the base of experience fostering communication and interactions" (Łukowski 2002: 86). The references mostly come from the first-hand experience of the space and social situation in the space. Common celebration amplifying the sense of community are of special importance (Carr 2009: 134). Such experiences, in turn, could lead to creating the identification with the city understood as urban structure and society. Moreover, identification is strengthened by social events and common celebration building up social relations and social ties. Even in contemporary world in which more and more relations move into virtual reality the common places are necessary (Urry 2008: 259).

Nevertheless, the results of the research show that spatial identity on its individual level is not a common phenomenon. It confirms the thesis on non-territorial sources of identity in contemporary world. However, space is still an important component of identity for about 40% of city inhabitants. In the process of creating such identities, important urban public spaces like market squares, parks, recreational areas, symbolic spaces, on the one hand, and inhabited districts, on the other, play crucial role. It shows rarely discussed problem of the meaning of urban public space: its role in the process of creating the identity.

Finally, let us come back to Louis Wirth. This is him who pointed to space as one of the dimensions of heterogeneity (except for ethnicity, religion, social class etc.) and another indicator of urbanism. For some people space has only the functional meaning, while for the others it can have the potential for creating their identity/identities.

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Tożsamość przestrzenna
w kontekście teoretycznym i empirycznym

Streszczenie

Artykuł podejmuje problem funkcjonowania i znaczenia tożsamości przestrzennej. W odniesieniu do koncepcji Petera Weichharta wyróżnia się trzy poziomy tożsamości przestrzennej: indywidualny, społeczny i instytucjonalny. Jak pokazują wyniki prowadzonych badań o indywidualnym wymiarze tożsamości przestrzennej można mówić w przypadku około 40% badanych. Taki odsetek respondentów deklaruje istnienie przestrzeni wzmacniającej ich identyfikację z miastem. Znacząco łatwiej identyfikowane są obszary stanowiące o charakterze miasta, budujące społeczny wymiar tożsamości przestrzennej. Z kolei wymiar instytucjonalny poszerza spektrum kluczowych dla miasta przestrzennych odniesień tożsamościowych. Kluczowy wniosek wyprowadzony z prezentowanych danych dotyczy istnienia wspólnoty doświadczeń przestrzennych, która z kolei wpływa na tworzenie miejskiej tożsamości zarówno w wymiarze indywidualnym, jak i społecznym.

Słowa klucze: tożsamość przestrzenna, miasto, tożsamość miasta